

Information and Training for PGR supervisors

Dr Marina Carravetta

Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (FEPS)

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UoS regulations and procedures for
PGR supervision and examination

Aim of this presentation

To ensure you are familiar with key regulations related to PGR training and progression milestones, and examination, located in:

- [Regulations for Research Degrees](#) and Higher Doctorates.
- [Code of Practice](#) for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision.
- [Quality Handbook](#), Postgraduate Research Section.
- Look at this [link](#) for up-to-date resources for UoS supervisors.

This is aligned with the [Quality Assurance Agency Quality Code for Higher Education](#) for the expectations, core practices, common practices, advice and guidance

Other relevant supervisor training sessions

- Faculty-based training – bi-annual FEPS PGR supervisor forum
- On Staffbook:
 - Examining The Doctoral Thesis (Provided by CHEP)
- On Blackboard:
 - Training for new doctoral supervisors at the University of Southampton ([link](#))
 - Diversity-001: Equality & Diversity in Practice

Getting started

Information on Resources and Roles

Key resources for you in Southampton

[Doctoral College Home Page](#)

[PGR Handbook](#)

[CHEP Resources for Doctoral Supervisors](#)

Each School has their own PhD programme(s).

PGR Milestones further discussed, updated with School-specific information.

There are different practices across the Schools, i.e. required training, milestones, and so on.

Links to FEPS PGR induction as well as individual School inductions provided in our [Portal](#).

Duration of candidature

Degree	Minimum period of candidature		Maximum period of candidature	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
PhD	24 months	36 months	48 months	84 months
iPhD	36 months	48 months	60 months	96 months

Further details can be found [here](#).

- Monitoring of research students is via [PGR Manager](#)
- Records of all the progression reviews and other reports are stored on PGR Manager
- Research students and supervisors can check key milestone dates on PGR Manager
- Submission of the final thesis is on PGR Manager
- It is a **requirement** that students and staff comply with PGR Manager workflows to record progress in a timely manner.
- A guide can be found [here](#).

Responsibilities of supervisors (1)

- Detailed in the [Code of Practice for Research Degree Candidature and Supervision](#).
- Supervisory team must have at least two UoS members. Supervisory team update completed on PGR Manager at the start of PGR candidature.
 - At least one member must have prior experience of supervision that has resulted in a successful doctorate.
 - Main supervisor must not be on probation, must not be emeritus, and if fixed-term their contract must outlast candidature.
 - Supervisory team can be revised later on to reflect changed in contract/ end of probation.
 - Co-ordinating supervisor must have a permanent contract.
 - Supervisory loading must not exceed **6 FTE**, and no more than **10 students** in total. Nobody can contribute more than **80%**.

Responsibilities of supervisors (2)

- The Supervisory Team Update is completed on PGR Manager (under Candidature Management).
- Expectation to maintain regular contact with the research student (at least once a month for FT, and more frequently at the start of candidature)
- Meeting recorded at least once per month through PGR manager. Essential for students with VISA. Important in case of conflicts, complaints or appeals, to have an unbiased record of engagement.
- New supervisors must take appropriate training (regulatory and pedagogical) via CHEP and Blackboard.
- To provide pastoral support and/or refer the student to other sources of support, e.g. PGR Senior Tutor, Student Hub.
- Ask students about their wellbeing; they may think it's not appropriate to mention unless you raise it

Responsibilities of supervisors (3)

If a colleague on a supervisory team leaves the University, it is their responsibility to inform the Doctoral College (FEPS) team and their Doctoral Programme Director (DPD):

- The University has an obligation to replace them on the supervisory team.
- The new supervisory team must have the consent of the student.
- The new supervisory team must meet the regulations.
- The remaining supervisor(s) should check with Doctoral College (FEPS) team and DPD that they have been informed a colleague has left, and request a new supervisor if necessary.

Responsibilities of supervisors (4)

- Monitor student's progress through activity reports and giving timely and constructive feedback.
- Be aware of Progression Review deadlines, and ensure student is aware of these and requirements for each review.
- Late progression hurdles without any request for special consideration from the student (see further down) put students at higher risk of failure / termination.
- Appoint Progression Review assessors, arrange meetings.
- Check completion and outcome of examination, and remind assessors to complete the PGR Manager forms shortly after. This is a recurring problem.
- Complete your own PGR Manager tasks in a timely manner.

Responsibilities of supervisors (5)

- Ensure student is made aware of unsatisfactory progress where relevant
- Ensure student is aware of, and conforms to, policies on ethics, research governance, intellectual property, academic integrity, and research data management
- Arrange the *viva voce*, including nomination of examiners
- See the [Code of Practice](#) and the [PGR Regulation](#) page for more information.

Advice, Support and Welfare Services

Doctoral College (FEPS) team

- Team leader Kirsten Hall
- Office: Building 13, Room 2047

Monday – Friday, 9am–5pm
- Email: feps-gradschool@soton.ac.uk
- Phone: +44 (0)23 8059 1924

Academic administrative support for all PhD students and Supervisors in the Faculty.

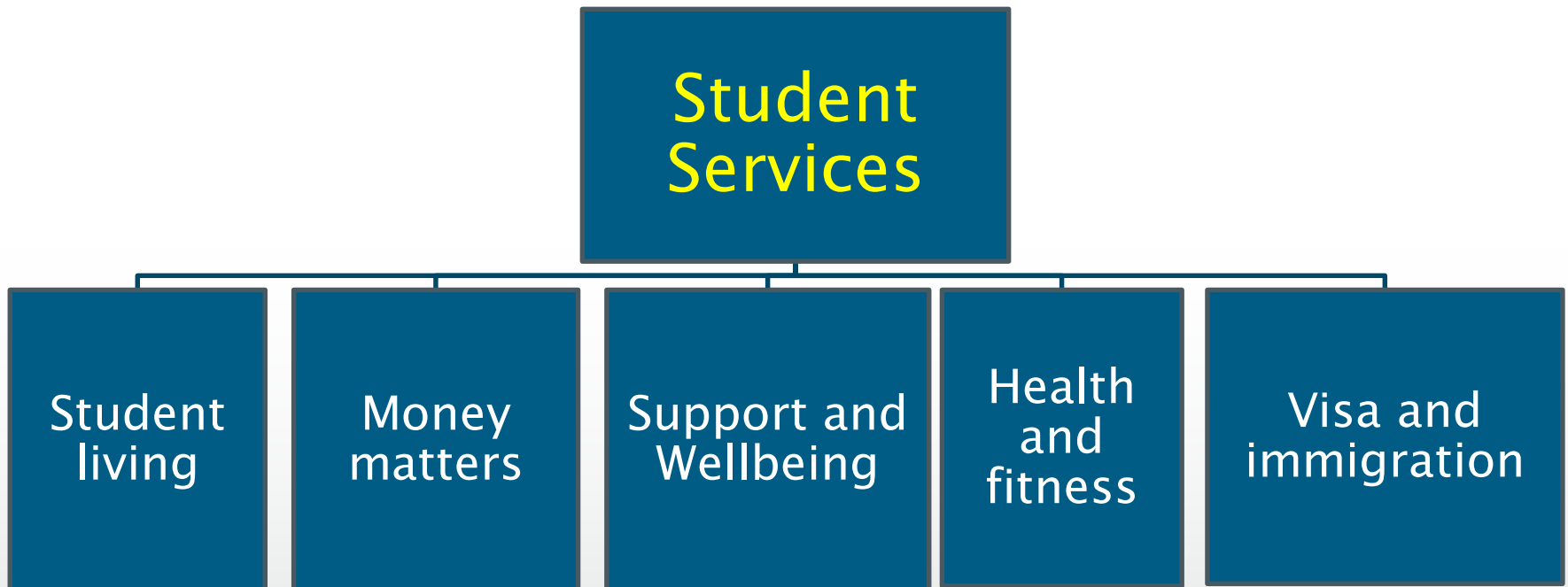
Do not hesitate to contact the team for advice or guidance.

Support for Supervisors

- Doctoral College (FEPS) team
- Doctoral Programme Directors in each School
- Head of Research Group / Head of Department / Head of School
- ED&I reps in each School

Additional support can be provided to students through the **Student Hub** and **Senior PGR tutors**.

The Student Hub



Link to main site [here](#) !

FEPS Graduate School

Director, Faculty Graduate
School (FDoGS)



Alan McAlpine

Deputy-Director, Faculty
Graduate School



Marina Carravetta

Doctoral Programme Directors

Chemistry



Marina Carravetta

Electronics and Computer Science



Michael Ng



Mark Weal

Physics and Astronomy

Elena Accomando

Zepler Institute



Nikitas Papasimakis

PGR training



Ioannis Kaparias

Engineering

Director of PGR programmes



Gustavo de Almeida

AAE



Ivo Peters

CMEE



Yongqiang Liu

ISVR



Felix Langfeldt

Mech Eng



Andrew Hamilton

UoSM



Khong Gan

Important milestones in candidature

Data management plan

- Keeping your data archived and safe is essential
- Information on the Data Management Plan is available on the Library website:
- Research Data Management: Data Plan for your PhD
- There is also a Blackboard training module on data management
- The Data Management Plan is completed on PGR Manager. Refer your students to help guide on:
- Data Management Plan - Guidance for students
- Must be reviewed at each formal progression stage and any new actions required noted by the assessors in their report.

Ethics assessment

- All researchers should be aware of ethics principles and practice
- There is also a Blackboard training module on ethics for PGRs.
- The Ethics Assessment is completed on [PGR Manager](#). A help guide is available [here](#).
- Your PGRs should complete the ethics assessment even if their project does not require ethics approval

Professional Development Planning

- A PhD degree provides training in how to conduct research
- Research students are expected to undertake some professional and research skills training (mainly in their first year)
- The Skills/Training Needs Analysis and Training Plan is completed on [PGR Manager](#) (under **Development**). A help guide is available at: [Training and Development - Guidance for students](#)
- This should be completed within the first three months of candidature
- Training needs must be reviewed at each formal progression stage and any new actions required noted by the assessors in their report.

Professional and Research Skills Training

- **Mandatory online training** for all University of Southampton PhD students is listed on the [PGR Development Hub](#):
- In brief, this includes:
 - ✓ Health and Safety Induction (+ School training)
 - ✓ Equality and Diversity
 - ✓ Ethics Awareness Training
 - ✓ Research Data Management
 - ✓ Research Integrity
 - ✓ SoTeach (only if you volunteer for any PGR teaching and demonstrating activities)

Professional and Research Skills Training

- For PGR students in FEPS, additional required **professional/research skills training courses** are:
 - ✓ Presenting Your Research
 - ✓ Technical Writing Skills
 - ✓ Research methodology for Scientists and Engineers (Engineering only)
- These required courses are a progression requirement.
- Additional required modules may be School specific (see your School guidelines).
- Information on these courses, and a wide range of optional courses are on the [PGR Development Hub](#)
- Training courses can be booked via [PGR Manager](#)

Graduate School
Instructors

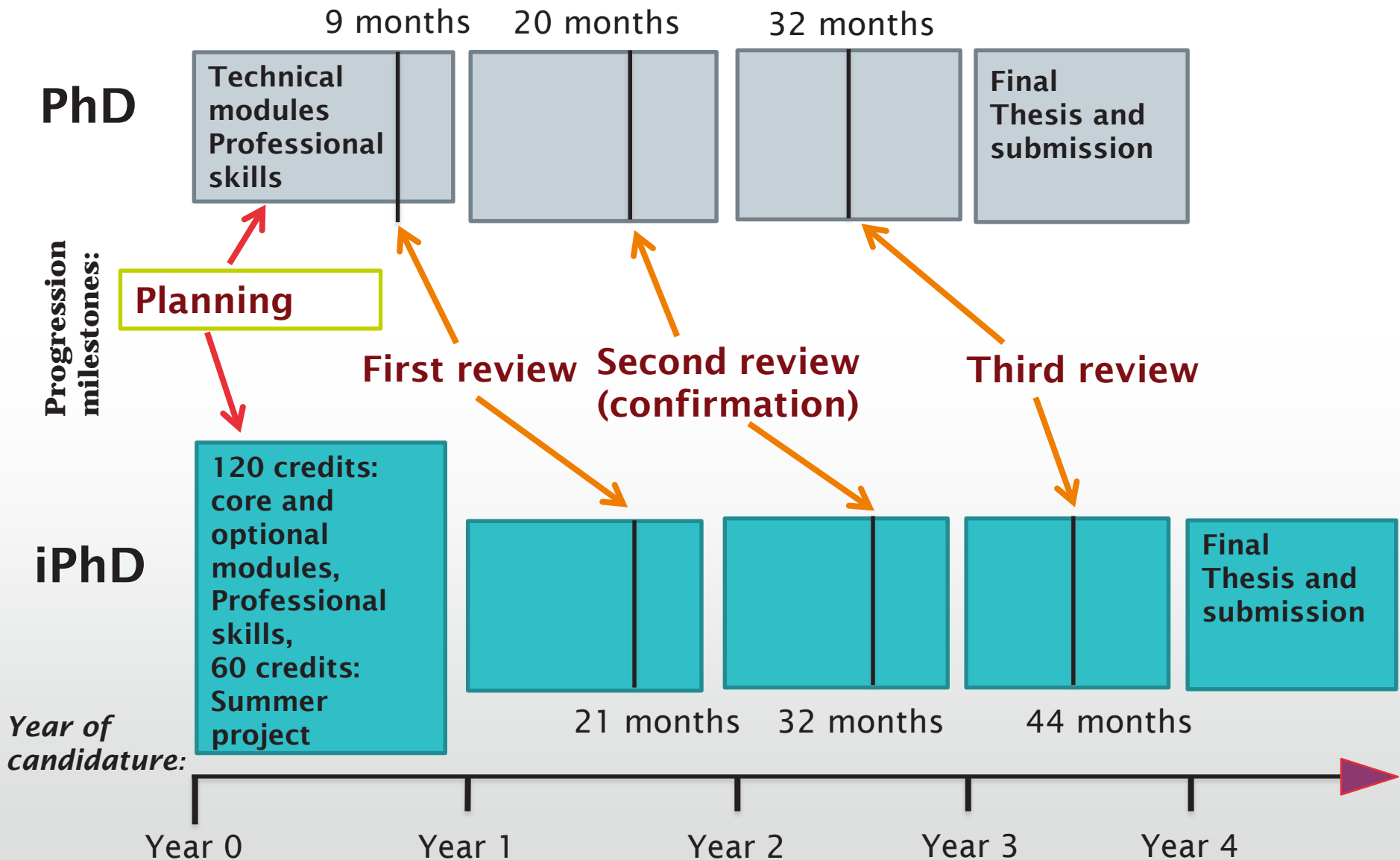
Progress monitoring

Progression Reviews

Key Principles

- Look at snapshot of progress at **fixed times**
- Students are allowed **two attempts** at each review
- Failure to meet the criteria will lead to **termination** of candidature or switch to **MPhil** (depending on assessment stage).
- It is the **supervisors' responsibility** to appoint assessors and ensure Progression Review decisions are completed before the deadline

Course structure



Progression reviews

Progression review	Full-time research students		Part-time research students	
	First attempt	Second attempt	First attempt	Second attempt
First review	Months 7-10	By end of month 12	Months 15-21	By end of month 24
Second review (confirmation)	Months 18-21	By end of month 24	Months 30-42	By end of month 48
Third review	Months 30-33	By end of month 36	Months 61-66	By end of month 72

Progression reviews

- Your PGRs are required to submit a **review report** by a deadline.
- Subsequently, a **review meeting** will be scheduled around one month later.
- A panel will assess their progress during a **review meeting**, when they will be asked technical questions on their work.
- The review panel will rate their work and provide feedback on their progress.

Successful and timely completion of each progression review is required in order to progress.

Progression reviews

- Part-time research students also have to complete interim reviews.
- Part-time research students who have not undergone a Progression Review in the previous twelve months of candidature should undergo an Interim Progression Review.
- Interim reviews are not formal progression reviews, but are carried out to ensure that progress is monitored annually.

Special Considerations, Suspensions, and Extensions

- **Application (from PGR student through PGR Manager) for:**
 - Suspension of candidature
 - Extension to candidature
 - Extension to Progression Review Report submission deadline, or reschedule review or viva
 - Extension to deadline for the submission of minor or modest amendments to a thesis, or submission of a revised thesis following a viva voce
 - Special Considerations given to an assessment outcome
 - Circumstances to be logged
 - Applications through PGR Manager
- **Supervisory statement** from main or co-supervisor is very important! See also the links from the [main regulations page](#) and from the [handbook](#).

First Progression Review

- **Submission:** The exact format of assessment is determined by the Faculty and advertised in PGR Student Handbook. It includes a review of the Development Plan and Data Management Plan. PGRs should submit a written report which:
 - defines the aims and objectives of the research project;
 - describes how the proposed research relates to other work in the area;
 - presents the work that has been carried out to date;
 - presents a plan for progression to Confirmation
- **Panel :**
 - Internal independent assessor & one supervisor
 - Other members of the supervisory team/external supervisor by invitation
 - ***Report*** is only by independent assessor
- **Outcome recommendations :** Progress or Reassess.

Student failure to submit documentation on time without extenuating circumstances (special consideration) results in **automatic fail** of first attempt

See **PGR Handbook** for your own School, to get your School-specific format and criteria.

First Progression Review:

Second attempt if decision is to reassess

- **Submission:**
 - The same format as the first attempt, submitted **within one month**.
- **Panel:**
 - Usually the same panel as the first attempt. The Faculty Director of Graduate School (FDoGS) may appoint an additional assessor. An independent chair must be appointed for the re-viva.
- **Viva:**
 - The second attempt at a Progression Review will involve a re-viva, unless the assessors deem that the resubmission is sufficient to progress.
- **Outcome recommendations :**
 - Progress or terminate candidature.
- On a recommendation to terminate candidature:
 - Made to the FDoGS **within ten working days** of the review meeting.
 - Notified to the student (subject to FEC approval) within **ten working days**.
 - The FDoGS should establish if there are any mitigating circumstances.

Second Progression Review - Confirmation of PhD candidature

- **Submission:** (as a minimum)
 - an overview of the research problem and rationale for the project;
 - a substantial literature review;
 - well-developed plans for fieldwork and data analysis (if applicable);
 - a review of the Personal Development Plan and Data Management Plan
- **Panel :**
 - Two independent assessors
 - Supervisor only present as observer
- **Outcome recommendations :** Progress or Reassess

Student failure to submit documentation on time without extenuating circumstances results in **automatic fail** of first attempt

See **PGR Handbook** for your own School, to get your School-specific format and criteria.

Second Progression – *Second attempt* if decision is to reassess

- Submission:

- The same format as the first attempt, submitted **within 2 months**.

- Panel:

- Usually the same panel as the first attempt. The FDoGS may appoint an additional assessor. An independent chair must be appointed for the re-viva.

- Viva:

- The second attempt at a Progression Review will involve a re-viva, unless the assessors deem that the written resubmission is sufficient to progress.

- Outcome recommendations:

- Progress; or
- Terminate candidature; or
- Transfer to MPhil

- On a recommendation to terminate candidature:

- Made to the FDoGS **within ten working days** of the review meeting.
- Notified to the student (subject to FEC approval) within **ten working days**.
- The FDoGS should establish if there are any mitigating circumstances.

Third Progression Review

- **Criteria:** has developed an adequately detailed plan of work and is on track to enable the research degree to be completed within the allowable registration period
- **Submission:** The format of assessment to be determined by the Faculty and advertised in Student Handbooks. It will include a review of the ANA and Data Management Plan. As a minimum, the student should submit a written report which:
 - Presents the work that has been carried out to date
 - Presents a plan for the remainder of the PhD
 - Outlines a plan for submission of the thesis
 - Outlines the thesis structure
- **Panel:** All members of supervisory team
- **Outcome recommendations:** Progress or Reassess.

Note: Student failure to submit documentation on time without extenuating circumstances results in **automatic fail** of first attempt

See **PGR Handbook** for your own School, to get your School-specific format and criteria.

Third Progression - *Second attempt* if decision is to reassess

- Submission:
 - The same format as the first attempt
- Panel:
 - Internal independent assessor & one supervisor
 - An independent chair must be appointed for the re-viva.
- Viva:
 - The second attempt at a Progression Review will involve a re-viva, unless the assessors deem that the written resubmission is sufficient to progress.
- Outcome recommendations:
 - Progress; or
 - Terminate candidature; or
 - Transfer to MPhil
- On a recommendation to terminate candidature:
 - Made to the FDoGS **within ten working days** of the review meeting.
 - Notified to the student (subject to FEC approval) within **ten working days**.
 - The FDoGS should establish if there are any mitigating circumstances.

Interim Progression Reviews

- Part-time students who have not undergone a Progression Review in the last twelve months should have an Interim Progression Review.
- *It is advisable to hold an interim progression review if a student is in nominal registration but has not had a review in more than 12m*
- If a Progression Review is due in the next month, the FDoGS may waive the Interim Review
- **Submission:** The format of assessment is determined by the Faculty and advertised in PGR Handbook. Minimum requirements are detailed in the Code of Practice. It will include a review of the ANA and Data Management Plan.
- **Panel** – all members of the supervisory team
- **Outcome:** There is no standard outcome, but as a minimum students will be given written feedback, and guidance on any actions to be taken to support progress.
- An unsatisfactory interim review may lead to an Exceptional Progression Review.

Exceptional Progression Reviews

Scheduled on the direction of the FDoGS

Student informed in writing that failure to satisfy the panel may result in a recommendation for termination.

Panel: Will follow the procedure for 2nd progression review, and second attempt requires Independent Chair

Viva: Will involve a viva

Outcome of initial meeting: Continue in candidature, or re-assess. If re-assess: A written action plan, targets and deadlines for improvement, which will be due for review after no more than 3 months from receipt of the action plan. This will be sent to the student in writing within **ten working days** of the panel. The panel will meet with the student after the action plan deadline and assess the progress against the targets of the action plan

Outcome of second meeting: Continue in candidature, or terminate candidature.

The recommendation:

- Made to the FDoGS **within ten working days** of the review meeting.
- Notified to the student (subject to approval) within **ten working days**.
- If the recommendation is continuation of candidature, the student should be given written guidance on future work.

On FDoGS acceptance of a recommendation to terminate candidature:

- This must be approved by Chair of FEC, then formally reported to next meeting.
- Subsequently reported to Senate.
- Notified to the student within ten working days of the second progression review attempt, and informed of the appeal procedures.

Procedures when facing risks of withdrawal or termination of candidature

1) Termination as a result of a Review:

- Must always involve a panel including an individual who is independent of the supervisory team
- Can be a scheduled Progression Review, or an Exceptional Progression Review

2) Termination as a result of failure to undertake the responsibilities of a research student

- See Code of Practice for list of responsibilities

3) Termination due to lack of contact or failure to return from suspension

4) Termination as a result of failure to submit a thesis by the end of the maximum period of candidature

See also this [link](#).

Full fees vs nominal registration (1)

- **Nominal registration** is the last part of the PhD, when PGRs are primarily writing-up their thesis.
- PGRs can transfer to nominal registration on PGR Manager when they have completed all the progression milestones and their supervisor certifies that they have **finished** all research and written in draft form a significant part of their thesis.
- Not all students request to move to nominal registration.
- The period of nominal registration is up to a maximum of **six months**. A small nominal registration fee is payable, but there are no additional tuition fees.

Full fees vs nominal registration (2)

- Student can get further time to write up beyond the 6 months mark if they:
 - Secure a candidature extension via special consideration (only granted if there are sufficient grounds for it).
 - Switch to part-time before going nominal. 50% FTE will provide 12 months of nominal registration.
 - Suspend for periods of time when they are unable to work on their thesis.
- Students have no insurance while on nominal registration and they are **not allowed** to perform any experimental work.

Examination

Final Examination: Nomination of examiners and viva arrangements (1)

- Viva can be **in person or online** (TEAMS/Zoom/Skype...). Online vivas are no longer the exception. Easier to select opponents from other Countries or unavailable to travel for personal or work reasons.
- One internal examiner and one external examiner. Staff candidates are examined by two external examiners, and an internal examiner.
- Internal examiner should not be member of supervisory team, collaborating/co-authoring researcher, or member of staff involved in pastoral support of the student.
- One examiner can be drawn from the Confirmation panel provided that they have had no further material contact with the research project since Confirmation, and that the other examiner is entirely new to the project.

Final Examination: Nomination of examiners and viva arrangements (2)

- External examiner who has examined a PGR at UoS within the last two years would not normally re-appointed; and if at all possible the same applies to examiners from institutions where UoS members of staff have recently examined for the same subject.
- Collectively, the examiners should have acted for at least three doctoral examinations.
- Collectively, the examiners should be familiar with examination practices and standards in the UK.
- External examiner's travel expenses with original receipts are capped. Check details with your School. Supervisor to provide an additional budget code to graduate school for travel expenses above set threshold.

Final Examination: Forms and detailed guidance

Guidance can be found here:

- From Quality handbook, [here](#).
- From PGR handbook, [here](#).

The guidance and forms are updated regularly. Please read carefully.

Detailed in the [Code of Practice](#):

- to ensure the examination is conducted according to the University's regulations;
- to ensure that the research student is treated fairly and appropriately;
- to ensure that the outcome of the examination is fair and appropriate given the research student's performance;
- To provide a report after the *viva voce* examination.
- The *QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education* states: “The use of an Independent Chair encourages consistency in examination processes and provides an additional viewpoint if the conduct of the *viva* should become the subject of a research student appeal.”

Forms [here](#).

Adding value: A good viva experience

- The *viva* is critical to the assessment decision of whether to award a doctorate in a quarter of cases.
- The *viva* places huge demands on the interaction & communication skills of those involved - the atmosphere can be highly charged. An Independent Chair, even when appearing to be doing nothing special, can help everyone to feel protected, behave well and have a good experience.
- The greater transparency called for within UK doctoral *viva voce* examinations have the added benefit of allowing us as academics to see *vivas* other than those we are involved or invested in.
- IC provides a window on a range of examination styles, informing our refinement of our own performance as examiners.
- IC will not receive a copy of the thesis and do not need to be a subject specialist.

Links to [Regulations](#), [Code of Practice](#) and [Quality Handbook for Examination](#) provided.

Examiners' Joint Report and Recommendation Form

- Part A: Does the work demonstrate an original contribution to knowledge? (yes/no)
- Part B: Four QAA descriptors of PGR degree (yes / yes (subject to specific amendment) / no)– if 'subject to specific amendment' or 'no', please comment on the extent to which criteria have not been met
- Part C: Examiners jointly comment on the thesis and on the candidate's performance in the viva. Include detail of any amendments required.
- Part D: Recommendation, including timescales where relevant
 - Examiners can request a **second attempt** at making minor/modest amendments (but only the amendments originally requested)
 - A candidate whose minor/modest amendments are unsatisfactory after second attempt can fail
 - If examiners are unsure that a thesis would meet the criteria for award even after minor/modest amendments, they should instead recommend a revision for re-examination
- Joint Report subject to approval of FDoGS.

Permission to Deposit Thesis form

- Following successfully passing the doctoral degree, the thesis (and data where appropriate) is expected to be deposited with the University
- Candidates submit their final thesis on PGR Manager. Candidates should discuss with their supervisor and consult the 'Guidance' document on thesis embargos.
- Embargos should only be requested in **exceptional circumstances**
 - ‘publication pending’ not sufficient – candidate expected to provide publication plan and evidence that the intended publisher considers a e-thesis to count as prior publication (see 'Guidance' document for examples of publishers who do not, e.g. Elsevier)
- UKRI expect full text of thesis to be publically available within 12 m
- Sponsor may require a thesis to be embargoed – require evidence.
- Forms not following this guidance will be rejected

Thank you

Based in part on training materials from the
Graduate School Directorate
of Faculty of Social Sciences